**How MLS Safety Fields Support Broker Cooperation**

Tracey Hawkins ([00:00](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/kN6ULsqu88KjfidEldQjaElq0baC6G501GE4u9haVJxJ7AZD1_7eV6nNJdcAB1nySWAdfgrloOteNQvvtFgjl-fwMUs?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=0.33)):

Many real estate professionals may start noticing new Safety Fields in their MLS.

Sam DeBord ([00:05](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/ZPsA3FoyO3BxszlWBiwSm5_l6_AfdHa69SoIqncXfSenkJx9zKo31l7c4EFXqjUmvBJdZj7rmZfrn5I49whvx8oGQ70?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=5.16)):

This is sort of a baseline for the ability of brokers to help one another in serving their customers in the market.

Tracey Hawkins ([00:10](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/qx8taY6lVgzR6sfXneznHtqxmdfOEnWTWCx4bvggCfk-v-OCSvE-0vTuimEALE5gaAeLe97CJ29UkYQW_nBwKrPUKI0?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=10.65)):

How MLSs gather information on property safety conditions can be important, but don't misunderstand what those Safety Fields are for because inaccuracies can cause a ripple of issues.

Johnny Mowad ([00:21](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/6xpkKjp4NdPdxGFoWZDHoN6_HSfqaCV8EDLm6_zgZo0zMCk_AX_7lVHtk9XKdb81gTlbdr-HtKIXG6atoT28YlJlKCI?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=21.03)):

You don't want to create a situation where you're basically doing a blueprint for somebody trying to cause harm.

Tracey Hawkins ([00:30](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/e-qRWGeEoAL7om-3PYDglgLEqluV9q3ErDJm0_hsgs1Ypsn2M1MdPTdL79nczJOZr3eS2xiyuKztnWGq-jyjRkiu8DQ?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=30.09)):

You're listening to Drive With NAR: The Safety Series, powered by REALTOR Magazine in partnership with the REALTOR Safety Program. Hear harrowing stories from real estate pros who have faced danger in the field, and expert advice on how to work safely. Get more real estate safety tips at NAR.realtor/safety.

([00:51](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/u47Wv7KcApUvJMn6jFQ4Qs42B-UqUhzRN6r9aL2l2qAulP5UgKdYzsBFVwH3DsV7rLaKAfxtvJECSsO02yhkOYeVC_I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=51.45)):

We'd like to thank Offerpad for sponsoring this month's episode. I'm Tracey Hawkins, and MLS Safety Fields can be an important place to share vital property intel with other real estate pros in your market. Let's talk about their purpose and best practices with two people who have been intimately involved in bringing Safety Fields to fruition. First up is Sam DeBor. He is the CEO of Real Estate Standards Organization, also known as RESO, which helped create valuable national guidance about MLS Safety Fields for local adoption. Sam is also a former real estate broker. Thank you for being here, Sam.

Sam DeBord ([01:25](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/WSVU-ljNP6JmCIptaj_gg5WrDxOWHik0IDhYsHsjJOirxRT8crm60ljlxEq-C5Lh9WYo-_JYic5IQDTHmUj9punilbc?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=85.32)):

It's great to be here, Tracey. Thank you for having me.

Tracey Hawkins ([01:29](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/IVn9mrUCr-_A9DHs8Kin_QzRUhp0Fa1gMIdFsA1Cz06dwasJU-49BTiCMgiyMfDyEjvmtJ53995w-D_nhXWwuTcyr6g?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=89.37)):

And Johnny Mowad is an associate broker with Ebby Halliday REALTORS in Dallas who helped shape NAR work related to the MLS Safety Fields through the MLS committee. Glad to have you here, Johnny.

Johnny Mowad ([01:39](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/n9AIke3L_dFHTKHMi1eJyx1q9yRnwfAY2VrojWBJS1XvW0wU6q8ZdpLSerZLOOArDtGmPPVowrulyv8W8Vth3Ghiit4?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=99.27)):

Thanks for having us.

Tracey Hawkins ([01:40](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/aPygxfbH7hpM2DxlrUCtxboyiQGHMEi9g_Y9LDnbfgqOfT4huwQnAxG1H-rR85uqQPEYiDjssg1-ibvVOxkUqhoo_Rc?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=100.77)):

The MLS is a topic that doesn't get discussed nearly enough, and to have two people who know it inside out is ideal. But before we get started, I want to talk about basics. First of all, MLS stands for multiple listing service. I was a real estate agent about 35, 36 years ago, and I remember when the MLS to me was like a phone book with pictures and descriptions. What I'd like each of you to do is to define what the MLS is and what it does. And let's start with you, Sam.

Sam DeBord ([02:09](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/W_TDWCizNvgLA_dm9q8NCr1s05LfY3BwL1LkjPEzRjgDste28yKKRPC3P1EPNcj8dEeeTvaYoAK2rR3XIKOuk8gS9Mw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=129.57)):

Sure. Thanks, Tracey. So the MLS is a broker cooperative. At the end of the day, it's brokers agreeing to work together based on shared rules. So everyone decides that there are rules that they want to comply with because it makes their businesses better, it makes the services they offer better, and it makes for a better marketplace for consumers through access to more inventory and just more transparency and information.

([02:33](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/RWOuAJV9smfeNYf3VDwflIpJnV-NW7vI4EwQVlEb2ozssiyflT6ldCoOzC0UA4G4WBQ8qurwaAed5UCkCQKvz-igr7k?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=153.15)):

So it's really something that raises the bar for the real estate profession, but also for consumer experience. And there's a lot of technology layered on top of that. But at the end of the day, the core of that MLS is really those brokers agreeing to work together for the benefit of their customers.

Tracey Hawkins ([02:49](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/FOuKM9AossFU46x-o7kb7emOPj9IeJJ0Xaar7pa2PScP6ZEgKqYvHK3PnEdIh5lbIIkSj01NQc5twmqvIK_WfkWOQWo?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=169.17)):

And then Johnny, I know you also said the reason you wanted to start an inspiration is that it helped increase the safety and culture. Could you speak to that?

Johnny Mowad ([02:57](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/TfiZAkKOPjtlik7BvSng-QMQWL7hghmp_0lcoVzjda8XjEmH_DrcdcBm9CAQp0DdPHFpdR4xF3UuxIa5oaKwMiW9J-k?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=177.96)):

When we talk about safety, it's really an all encompassing concept that it's not just about the physical safety, whether it be the practitioners in the elements and around in an or inside a home. It's more about how can we communicate better between the practitioners and listing agents to make our jobs easier, and of course, create a safe environment for all parties involved.

Tracey Hawkins ([03:21](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/LxwGEtH4oagV_8EBEYY2tVhAsA7Dt862BKChpd048yQSLzzympypLEHTGxIskrHm_qF2aPpTBsvqz5o8LP1CWymn-4A?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=201)):

Oh, I love that. Sam, you talk about clues and you said that we can help each other absent clues and that the clues are used to make it safe. Can you talk about how clues factor into the MLS Fields?

Sam DeBord ([03:33](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/PkxiwncejcvyXZtDq3asG9RjHCeBeEV_7Qz6AdxiYIIEz3gNXRXHrBZdaPqeoN6JXD5crg5KHUGmhlU3MobSeSAbKEA?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=213.21)):

Sure. The information that brokers can share with each other, much like the MLS in general, is just leveraging this group's strength and this group's knowledge. So a listing broker can help not just those buyer's brokers, but also the buyers have a safer experience because they know more about the property than people who haven't been there yet.

([03:52](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/XI1MdYFyPuw8OFZfr89vrsxQS2qT8gSpgHKWeFAzZS84UiaSwLWlLxNBLq9fBsEZh2FUExO3SWTpOjIf8JiXxVim-cw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=232.23)):

So we can leverage the knowledge of all of the listing brokers and listing agents in an MLS by them highlighting things that may or may not be issues for any individual buyer's broker, buyer's agent and their buyer customers, but in individual situations, those things will be very important.

([04:08](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/5sLGlXJ9H6mLXX3xLYptOWYvQl24EY6BDlBSgupCA8-vMcY08Z4s5LawV1DnblG2q8ViAtHNpSeEByYVbsJe20ZksG8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=248.46)):

So things like who might be in the home when they get to the home, what the power source might be like, if there's lighting issues, if there's electricity issues, if it's hard to access this property because it's in a remote location, there's not high visibility there on the property, maybe you've got inconsistent cell phone service. So we leverage the knowledge of the brokers and agents in an MLS and the folks working in realtor committees to be able to help describe those things well.

Tracey Hawkins ([04:37](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/njUHv0X_DnemTWPLv0piHjGAfj42wcecwNVb-6eS69LFqPByqQlJRDxNvYFQZyzmqRpwUoV6segqwLZk16EB-AjozZg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=277.74)):

Okay, great, great explanation. Now, I want to make sure our listeners understand what the MLS Safety Fields are for. I'm going to ask both of you, what kind of reformation should an agent put there? I know you just alluded to some of them. Sam, what kind of reformation not only should they put in those fields, but what should they not put in these fields?

Sam DeBord ([04:57](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/V6eNoDX-usrQ1_M719IXCJpX6HEhL7iAU2Zxrw7HFvNGsD9qmHrNDtRvktPpn-mJuVIBnSOfUg4SOgJ1hdDxlDc2Ycc?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=297.15)):

So there's two kind of general categories that I think are important to think about, and then Johnny can describe this better from a practitioner's standpoint. The words I would use are approximate and immediate, are these things that are on the property. They're not things that are about the neighborhood or the city, things that are just generalized for the area. Are they right there on the property and specific things that the agents and their customers should know about? The other thing is immediate.

([05:21](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/oBV7S-qf-4Z-_xBlvj3NhGszruWdQ2bpHYjYJud5JQECq_dKblAWFTjFPyvX9WBbB8M9xCURvNjn_UJYQbwEkUwN15k?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=321.93)):

Are they things that are going to be there the day that those folks go onto that property? It's not about, well, this area has intermittent crazy weather. It's not about climate change may affect it in the future. It's about what we know is going to be there when they come to that property that day. So if these clues are proximate and immediate instructions for people about the property, then we're really focused on what we need to be in terms of Safety Fields.

Johnny Mowad ([05:47](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/6hxyonJqXvGtDtfosLtsMkFUBZaIWZCM4PEpt8gX1uRdZkuuO2VvqpZfvnyJD8KUS0rMWLM8Qmkp84EzvmMrEzRXWos?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=347.91)):

Yeah. Just to piggyback off of what Sam was saying, in today's digital age, safeguarding our sensitive information is the most paramount thing we can do, not only as a practitioner, but as the safeguards to the multiple listing service systems. The real estate Safety Fields provide a crucial layer for all of us. And regardless, in our day-to-day activities, no matter what we're doing, we have to meticulously vet the secure and protect our data.

([06:12](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/tlo34Ww3Lfob4gUMlQeVA1esDcqIWF9JScYAGKaYkcNlIMZNY3q8QKtlAa_ISnjc1DPaYgMUHiIPnk87EkgAGB82-8U?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=372.72)):

Sam had already mentioned the top eight big fields that came from our safety committee meetings over the past several years. And as you mentioned, those are like, is it vacant? Is there heat? Is there lighting interior? Is there lighting exterior? Is there remote access? What do those look like? Is the electric on? So some of the basic fields are there to serve as just different protection layers.

Tracey Hawkins ([06:35](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/by5ABuORfyAXAD3yWDFju0HzOTVMzqyqXUBPXVYa2bwmbaIcxxoBAcR9WRXkTjrCk32mXCN1D1Q_xXZRaeNVhupgf_c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=395.97)):

Now, Johnny, what are your thoughts about how that information, including if it's an isolated property or if there's no electrical, how could that impact the safety of the agent who may be showing it?

Johnny Mowad ([06:48](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/CtmQntLzr1VZBn0wqj5gnJMrseu9XQXr91dW3LfdWacejXPfGnUjZ_lunEtn3Ve8Mm_wqE3DLvlHdfAfQfJKNwMAtCg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=408.42)):

So when everything started, there was basically a laundry list of items that people wanted included as far as multiple listing service fields, searchable fields, if you will. The different groups that met together came up with all sorts of what if situations, what if we put this in there? What if we do this? But what we were starting to see is that some of that information could actually lead to an unsafe environment.

([07:12](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/XzeotKpH0KNIs6QFC18QNkcFbcaZW9_SDuUTFaqRGViUeGR_0ZkK3Ogafj33zNUcBM4iJBsz3U_FAdnVI1qA_PAzunM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=432.3)):

And what that means is if somebody were to get access to those types of fields that are so sensitive that they could create an unfair advantage for somebody wanting to cause harm to a practitioner and/or a home, then they could weaponize these types of fields. So what the different committees that met over the years to try to come up with best practices decided is to focusing on those core eight items as we kind of went over as a best practice to include in your local MLS.

([07:42](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/9TW0iSmisiAmIZiCtc-T8ka89l46S-nQGxDi6oIerqQ5UzFDsZ6HVBuaW5HD4XhlSeTKEE-9KCIzwzz7CGzpxwpYHAo?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=462.54)):

The reason for that, again, is you don't want to create a situation where you're basically doing a blueprint for somebody trying to cause harm. The MLS is a tool. It is not a replacement for the local real estate professional. We can give you all of the information in the world at your fingertips, but if you don't know how to properly harness it and utilize it, then it is going to just be a waste of everyone's time.

([08:06](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/0Hb03MQHK7vQmvouIBnPadicSFIi2LFWvnvxBPRdhxp7lvIiAlWezMe5YtuK_XIlfJYdjx6hLLPqaP08JOCxKQ69ZIw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=486.66)):

So again, these Safety Fields are fundamentally important. However, it doesn't stop you from contacting the listing agent and having that personal phone call to say, "Hey, I'm going to go show property one, two, three on Main Street. Is there anything I need to know?" And in that one conversation, you're going to be privy to all of the information you need to know from the listing agent, which ultimately leads to the safest experience for all parties involved.

Tracey Hawkins ([08:30](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/Bjf84zmJL9s8rk2CrWVX41RqOIeAqwXMdLqVqb-FQGsoCpOMHQBri5iFDFz_S5pvqrVFeUTCFhecYjLEpurxVC-XvQY?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=510.78)):

So how do we balance that? If we know that information is important, how do we keep the so-called bad guys from accessing it and using it to target the agent? Are there privacy elements here on those listings? We'll start with you, Johnny, and then I'll like Sam to jump in.

Johnny Mowad ([08:46](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/kQimLXHDXFhmRKvO06OVnulFWlj8LlXkTBrw3mC74TlhW6LeNvgTznHMnjw9ilPLNZPPT7G8IQ5UF31-yiFBjOd-xcs?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=526.41)):

Absolutely. And I'll let Sam tag team on this one. But the multiple listing service system in general is a lockdown platform. What we choose, and I say we collectively, meaning the MLS of choice or wherever you're with, they release certain fields. And from those fields, that releasing of data is called a syndication.

([09:06](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/0fS4O5csc6w94Q001czoQTrjLg5EfqAvAQLRoxX6GVM_pVacU3o0qJk2UYfmLs1vKUJVOdsFbIOUw8zRIKsj_hGgLyg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=546)):

And so there are certain fields within the MLS that we do not syndicate, and those are usually private remark fields and sensitive fields of that nature. And from that, we can kind of control some of the information that's proprietary and or that doesn't need to be released to the general public. And Sam, I'll let you kind of tag in with some more of the finer details of how that works on the backend.

Sam DeBord ([09:27](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/ok85ZnmYA3yMStMQX2ZGzsfproUor5UwhqEIYBMWEf9NEq-HmXWTjOM1GGl7GCLKMCKPLRvqHT0N8qR7ju-0Hn-lJ8E?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=567.09)):

That's an important point, that there is a lot of information in the MLS that goes out publicly. But as Johnny said, things like private remarks are intended to be kept between the brokers, between the agents who are participants and scribers in the MLS, and there are reasons for that. So it's important to know that these standardized fields here for safety are a starting point. They're not everything.

([09:49](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/xFbhwPXxfT5Pbx-C1n9agkGhBqYraZX1rnFeOPUyjdzvfN7F-zJbIk__3Zzqswi3XPxTJFJEXnk5pmsMaV4lK-GDPes?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=589.53)):

The intent is to have some very well understood fields that brokers and agents in any market will be triggered to add this information to a listing because they see it repeatedly. They see it multiple MLSs if they're working in multiple MLS systems or the folks they work with across the country are using the same kinds of fields. So these are very common items that can and should be included in a listing. But again, for the agents and for the brokers not to be published on a website or in a consumer report.

([10:21](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/F_tOEuzriTiWhca_mOMZYIx8XXiY0_coJ0kocns98vKIaSFfH_s48ybFkrZjpth_YXrcS4pNvVRHSx_s24mQ0aOT0Kk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=621.12)):

That being said, there's a lot more information about individual listings that a listing broker and a listing agent might want to add for those buyer's agents, for those buyers themselves. So if you've got private remarks, there may be very unique safety characteristics that either in the private remarks of the MLS or with a phone call to the listing broker, those things can also be covered. But this is sort of a baseline for bringing everyone's level up a little bit and generally increasing the ability of brokers to help one another in serving their customers in the market.

Tracey Hawkins ([10:52](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/jVi9ByJaStSXLUpvhHsGNhecXE4TQrb7wo5SbKKD92jvsl9BszF3zHLKfgXUaYb-r9US-30QAFPFa2E3bIN28PyimQo?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=652.68)):

And I know that you both, everyone wants agents to get into the habit of actually looking at these fields. They're there to serve you and to help you. And I like the thought that you are just stressing the fact that this is private information, so that way agents, whether listing agents, they won't hesitate to put information that's necessary.

([11:12](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/EiG9uuVsKKDbX5BRbqJ7vi65Acjz4pRGFmQaHKbfiPxboVWxEl6zUmI9zsvrJ3rc5mOtEceRsedd93kLW8986E3r0UM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=682.74)):

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([11:32](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/EiG9uuVsKKDbX5BRbqJ7vi65Acjz4pRGFmQaHKbfiPxboVWxEl6zUmI9zsvrJ3rc5mOtEceRsedd93kLW8986E3r0UM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=682.74)):

Now, we also need to keep in mind that these fields are not catchall. I want you to talk a little bit about the agent who wants to call out every flaw in the property, every potential safety issue, anything that happens that may be kind of a one-off that may not have anything to do with the property. Johnny, how do we keep agents focused on what information goes in there?

Johnny Mowad ([11:51](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/z6ZLZJg9y_V580FeACVVD6_U51sKfSm5kQCopmLrNlkdAzDTnNFEKH1BIptlLqOYraZL7N6f9Q-PcO8CuoPI8AAqgUQ?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=711.99)):

Well, I don't believe that you can have too much information. If I have another practitioner that goes to one of my listings and wants to provide valuable feedback that for whatever reason they deemed it necessary to bring it to my attention, then that's something as an associate broker myself, I need to take serious. Maybe they had an experience where they're with a certain cell phone carrier that may not have the best access near my property.

([12:18](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_cQBg46C6kz-PblJgCawmrJf7JhLCGpVuR6EcXpLCT2bcEMh8iSg0TY_PH9e7CkIM6f9F564Rh7sv65Vmo6-2BpYgvg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=738.12)):

And sometimes it's not necessarily about safety, sometimes it's just about practicality and accessibility. Safety kind of is an all encompassing term, but when you go to show a house, now the modern age, with a lot of these digital locks on your cell phone, if you haven't updated your phone, you can't access the house. And now you're in a remote area and you never know what may happen.

([12:39](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/emqgbeT5RmUSmyYx8frtwY2zDD772LaiNDaAKuEVGKM8HxT37JEFTZEec2Pe8THu6arPccMxdftZoFCDcLaq9wt6jDw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=759.6)):

And/or you may be in a remote area where there's not a gas station nearby. And I have to say, as a practitioner who has not gone hybrid yet, that can be a safety issue too, running out of gas in a remote area. So I mean, there's so many things that go into it. And again, I just want to really drive the fact that, again, the MLS is an important tool, but in no means does it replace the practitioner in our real estate environment.

Tracey Hawkins ([13:04](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_f5sBFiJia0obK0z3gp7_2bn30aZmUIXcY5ooy28FUSzpkx0dIYMHTO8NUI3bJ3WpQkUVz3T03fJmPRbChgBXU6lP9Y?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=784.47)):

That makes a lot of sense. And Sam, you talked about transparency. Talk a little bit about how data accuracy can impact a transaction.

Sam DeBord ([13:13](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/gdEyIW1BNob1D87VpMqPxK00iAwB_AtcqA2_msWBDiGeIWdtJH6QHZXbfehY0KnsLOV-UMHqxKvcNyJRsqmriePi150?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=793.8)):

Sure. And from the perspective of Safety Fields, this is really why NAR and its committees brought this to us, is to not have everyone describe the same thing in 10 different ways if it's the same thing. If we can make it very easy for a listing broker and agent to add accurate information about power, about visibility, about cell phone service, even about the condition of a property, if it's still yet to be built or it's under construction, then that more accurate, simplified standardized information is also more easily consumed by the buyer's agents.

([13:45](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/sKElToaTI5pqsnrM0udtJyTXPkmVnFFCO2lTlPkIYTrDrpfVTalgbF_3dsQi7-xxl_buYxXUNKhJAYaKgz4qJUPlvZ8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=825.99)):

So when we know it's a very common thing, they don't have to go through paragraphs of private remarks to find out these very basic, straightforward things. So it creates efficiency and understanding for both sides of the transaction. And I think we see in the real estate brokerage space with real estate agents, there's a real comradery in the industry of folks who, yes, they're competitors.

([14:06](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/oGnMVRZkYuxrwu332ghoD2yuOoOiT6deP7ZMxGfo8MT5c1LJBoFAmP9j-OqyQdSZXXietUaUUfkkcyAG5MreVW1F5lo?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=846.51)):

Yes, they want to get the listing that their neighbor might be trying to get as well, but they work together and they really do have that sense of "We're in this together for the profession even while we compete and try to get more business than one another." So this is an opportunity to add that accuracy from the listing brokerage side to the buyer's brokerage side.

Tracey Hawkins ([14:25](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/kLnZ0_O5QlbVwe8JulKXFqznSlhYDgTv1fw1sS3Cw8DPfd2wUIB7LBteNJpQsRiqdWocMbIPaguuB7fDNxlnDOQA0_o?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=865.98)):

Let's talk a little bit about how the idea of this MLS Fields, how they came about. You touched upon it, Johnny, but Sam, tell us how RESO got involved.

Sam DeBord ([14:35](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/c53znAsIgPO35K4UEobwB7z1pPWOVepTgrnv3UdypFJKYq9QMZ_WY91RZKVBEzJwU5H4aAIEagg-_rN6jaiz2rAQgAo?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=875.25)):

Well, RESO got involved after NAR initiated a lot of this work. Again, the brokers and agents working through NAR committees, who are the ones who know the business issues, they're the ones who know the practical issues that need to be covered, came up with the idea over quite a bit of time and research. So that's certainly where the credit should go for this work. This group, the NAR Safety Advisory Committee, brought it to RESO as a proposal.

([14:59](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/boChGoJBhuUeiNLlglpfOU9DpOdwPKl1YS-sVcvkz570thcDxka89VxwDsQYNAcOy_xyrlrYMKMro6R0N4KPKNfCuq0?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=899.88)):

We're also implementing these fields to make sure that they're going to work in practice. At RESO, we don't go invent ways of doing business. We invent ways to standardize across systems when our members say they would like a common, efficient, standardized way to do things. So it was important that the MLSs and the brokers test these things out on their own.

([15:20](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/55HqQOhcnX3gmN1eyH11U1FRnVVLz3XUIzL5x0SiC6mbe39lI71qPouWFF_f0eDK3dt1KyaLtDLiU6GF6J3SKq577aY?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=920.37)):

And many MLSs do have their own Safety Fields already. And then when they decided that it was important to have a standardized way to do it across the country, so MLSs, who many of them work in two, three, even five different MLSs, they would've a common way to describe these things for buyers. But I think Johnny can talk more to the groups that initiated the business need.

Johnny Mowad ([15:41](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/S7UXIGcCN90MLaJbLcvJIWIjeD8jLEHSiriLiyMarTX24HtASb2e3sv6nUQ7T9aPfclxpl9KlpxrA8bpYZgYTGJPrqg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=941.55)):

There's a lot that came of it. Over the years, we've had one tragedy after another, and your heart stops every time you hear about another situation that arguably could have been prevented. We preach safety. We always talk about how to best protect our real estate profession, but the reality of it is we oftentimes put ourselves in very difficult situations.

([16:08](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/WA_qUKrT4dkj33OE9AFEqmVWrr0w_KhC2t_3hTG3Mr5ngnzeDZ8tCwYw0kK7bNXDzV0c7zyLcT1-hL-8g22C9AQa9IU?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=968.43)):

As we continue to strive to get better in our profession, the nice things that are coming about with recent changes are the needs and the requirements to do more vetting prior to your first showing. And I can't tell you how important that is, not only from a safety perspective, but just the way of doing business. You don't just randomly pick somebody up in your car you've never met on the side of the street. So why would you go open a door for somebody you've never met except for one phone call?

Sam DeBord ([16:39](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/OEvxefs3hus4lDWAIQngitzpzHje6OnpcR-ka1UKbvOsUTm86YcT7-dO9AU8604l3v3TTPEDlsPla8MyYKItFtRYNjI?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=999.36)):

I think Johnny hits on maybe the most important part of this whole conversation. You say "data standards" and some people's eyes might glaze over. You say "years of committee work," and folks might think, "Wow, that sounds like the least sexy part of the industry." But I've been an agent, I've been a broker, I've walked into homes with clients when there were squatters sleeping in the beds. I've had that feeling where you are worried about your own safety, about your client's safety.

([17:05](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/tOQmTXSRjaKRculQ44AA92tuU8sfYXBqFtvBTtVY1tvUxPLZsbuIsdXCrl6nGDzaxfSPeo__Vfj-kT2-4AC6w8s4Evc?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1025.4)):

There's a real visceral feeling of physical questioning of your safety level when you're in these situations. So it's important that our folks go out and do that every day. We've got folks out there, over a million licensees who are out there doing this every day in their markets. And so all of the, what some folks might call grunt work in the background to make these things more accessible and more simple for people to use are driven by really important daily experiences of those agents and brokers in the market.

Johnny Mowad ([17:34](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/l28PSzO9aDg_s29Sf44_IwNfkwtQbszUY3yleQHstGeW86O_5zwaPnUWxfTrOZN22e6O6W3Q992196itRsEuu9-9l04?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1054.38)):

Yeah. As Sam says, they don't show this on *Million Dollar Listing*, do they? When you're dealing with vagrants inside a home, I'm a six-foot three big, big guy. But I can tell you time, after time after time, I have been in very difficult situations, but luckily was trained by a great mentor. I have a great organizational background that has taught me how to get myself out of those situations.

([18:00](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/PlFXvN27DQ3xa9p8r8_pqOT2fNg_8qjLDO7zSNkIlj1ugNhg31Kr4uRk9SrmDIpRy3IThoKNvm8Y6ArhZpistBxp5C0?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1080.36)):

But you have an industry where people are just trying to pay rent, and they are putting themselves in some incredibly awkward and dangerous situations because they feel they have no other choice. But we need to do better in retraining our real estate professionals and letting them know that no commission check is ever worth your safety.

Tracey Hawkins ([18:22](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/N1HsQcGftU6HHFDS_FEthnIvmRKn5D31aNy0I7qTzpZPfepU3yjUF-X2ssNqc66_Eh_uC5OIKhrD9MDR0ISTEBeClbg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1102.95)):

And I'm glad you said that. Back in 2017, I wrote an article for REALTOR Magazine about ways the male agents put themselves in danger. So the fact that you're even thinking about that is good news and hopefully motivation for all agents to take a look at these fields and to take them seriously. Before we wrap up with your marching orders for your fellow real estate practitioners, let's talk a little bit about fair housing. How do these fields impact fair housing, and is there a chance for agents to avoid getting in trouble there? And let's start with you, Sam.

Sam DeBord ([18:55](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/ZteJLtJ9ix7-0uAGN5r6-Wa0iC_DajVrJPnSlj0w_Q-jCXDkfXvEFI3bTvamugRZSZ2xVwGZsk05S4ELoLrpH1YAozs?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1135.47)):

Sure. I think going back to the sort of frameworks we talked about earlier is important when you're assessing whether you're using these Safety Fields which have been vetted to ensure that they are compliant and supportive of fair housing issues, or whether you're trying to do additional things in your disclosures, you're trying to add information, whether that's private remarks, whether that's emails or phone calls, thinking about is this objective information? Is it proximate to the property? Is it an immediate concern with the property? Are we talking about property and not people?

Tracey Hawkins ([19:28](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/stFR5ziN59iTUte5QpdBvzB9sLnYwFAgDXHWloNgyq8JCLnUxyfi5JUhfmfooQHpYrDu37UKyeIJ1LgSTMWR6KK26PY?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1168.74)):

Johnny, why is there a need for national guidance on MLS Safety Fields?

Johnny Mowad ([19:33](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/SaU7fdA4C_0TntSH-fodx8B-On81OwUKAzTLUDB78t5Oat4JL6TBAMzh2JH7xvtxm25R23cdvSbP3MPrENZQ5KNvoKM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1173.54)):

The need for national guidance in the Safety Fields is primarily because we have such a wide range of practitioners out there. Of course, you have to be licensed in your state. Of course, you have to be under a broker to practice as a licensee. However, the discrepancy is there's so many ways to do business.

([19:53](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/vJShsTvl5n3lSpdoibR6NCtf-1dm-eVYlgp-FV6dyihaEnzbfPq4BQG3ZEaCSluWTADDy7u5tvfUkTFLLbCkOVmmcU8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1193.37)):

So by having a national platform out there, or at least a national platform to provide some sort of guidance and best practices, allows for all practitioners to be swimming in the right direction together, working as one so that the information is recognizable, first of all, and that it is something that can be used in your daily practice.

([20:13](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/scVhjR8GFKLJ787y2tea9TStytFok0645YJIqYz0F5JLrIt3rc2MvHA_DcCUQXfeHMZm0XZzjvcD7lrOCSD4eF9eVbI?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1213.92)):

Because if you have different rules, different protocols, different fields in all different areas, that can be very confusing, not only to the practitioner, but should any of the information get out to the consumer, that can also have a devastating effect too. So again, it's more about just having a clear and transparent process for all parties involved and ultimately representing what's best for everyone, safety, safety for mind, body, and the property, so.

Tracey Hawkins ([20:41](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/qeYgc2_504clXtmci8wFtnzi6qMHJLJeDrmH-PZN0f-SRpxhuWs6vAMal-PQsEMkejoGrsfOSSQ1xuFGjYaHXguAL5w?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1241.76)):

Thank you both so much for your role in getting the Safety Fields implemented in the MLS. Now, I want each of you to give some actionable advice to your fellow real estate practitioners. Why do they need to pay attention to these fields, whether it's the listing agent or the buyer's agent, what's the value added there? Let's start with you, Sam.

Sam DeBord ([21:02](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/kV1AskobwJ_RIjOKNA9liUTqG1mhP2wYREEr2bIttxpBbfLH7gOhHUVcwRR0EnIVp2MJpGFXQnaY5GzO7-B7VsrLFcg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1262.04)):

So these things are not requirements. It's not a requirement that your MLS implement these fields in their system, and it's not a requirement that your agents fill out these fields on their listings. So it's going to take some communication. It's going to take some advocacy. If you think this is important for your marketplace, then it's important that your MLS is having this discussion about implementing these fields.

([21:22](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/wYnsMeTO2LoR-Bx06x9kf684MaOB5e1bP9qaQbOd6ppohPxvJr6ADnUxaHDD2M-yUm8zYYrCo5GwIIIs_8EVEIPCz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1282.95)):

If you think it's important for your agents, then it's important that they're informed and they know when these fields are available, how to fill them out correctly, how to make sure that they're working in a way that's benefiting their broker cooperative, the folks that they've agreed to work with under a certain set of rules. So having that information shared broadly and then having those open discussions with your MLS marketplace and your brokerage are important to get these things implemented if they're important for your businesses.

Tracey Hawkins ([21:50](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/GymJQknhTyuvbnfaK5O6KYoIPZql13EG32EgunJdD4Rz5wSn2YLQY7zsZtY2nmUrQ-uoG-gma6NDMiKyrxj83t2Bgy0?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1310.88)):

Johnny?

Johnny Mowad ([21:52](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/rWFMCNh7u7wrQuBVL2XomAu8rk1c9mMoAJQ0uTc0gWwz0IWS60rYhRZaiap6Lse_mCib6iiv9H80_gXlJk0Ia4A1Bg4?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1312.11)):

If I were to tell you one person in your brokerage firm may be seriously injured and/or killed this year, what would you do? My advice is to contact your broker, have these awkward conversations, discuss what your brokerage's safety policies are. By learning the best practices within your brokerage firms, you can ultimately feed those up through the state, the local, the national level, and help get us the information that we need.

([22:18](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/aC3YiTyq9lxYmCwhQoLrrOIxgyvne0uYnhmWvtatlgtb_pBslr6TMb6cH7OR5Br07bGOJBhhs1oIM4QE7l39PrLMkL4?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1338.93)):

Because that one person in your firm that could be seriously injured and or killed this year, that can be prevented. And by properly utilizing Safety Fields, working together as an industry and collectively working to maximize our MLS, which is our most important tool in our industry, we can work together to prevent a lot of bad things that happen out there.

Tracey Hawkins ([22:41](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/vVknut2QOe0R-vc0N7et1derveeXGaItZD76duShOIuw0KQ7jeqSUVc6gRFnpM4I1aJ6l6p1owUl4HyXlhszgwNmMz8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1361.55)):

Excellent advice. When will the fields appear?

Sam DeBord ([22:44](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/bA_JXGHZy5vmreUVor-o62Yb3m8G533XsKE5HfZCZKbow1PMqlA0ppri2I4eRT-fuzz7e-xV2WImJae2JxzlSNaRrXA?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1364.22)):

So these are just newly approved, so this is going to be something that's coming to your MLSs in the coming year, and again, an opportunity for them to implement these in the coming year in the new version of what we call the data dictionary. And we'd never want to end a podcast talking about a data dictionary, but here we are. So talk to your MLS. All you need to know is that NAR has publications on this information, and you can get that information and share it with your boards and your MLSs.

Tracey Hawkins ([23:09](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/RMJYTNli2GkUee84sJCOlu0JYhncIaJ5fsHzMt3QgstXH_twEyXbcDH55ACdP3fK1XIdqylFgk0SpaksZLlgaOYL_Ao?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1389.72)):

We couldn't have had two better people here to talk about this important topic. Agents, you have your marching orders. Go forward and show your value. Use the tools that are provided to you to help you stay safe and to protect the consumers. Everyone, stay safe. Thank you for joining us on Drive With NAR: The Safety Series. New episodes of the Drive With NAR podcast drop twice a month at magazine.realtor/drive or wherever you get your podcast. NAR does not endorse any product and does not take a stance on any specific safety tool. Members are encouraged to use only those safety tools in which they're properly trained. Find more safety resources at NAR.realtor/safety.